

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 IGA-02 IO-13 OES-06 SP-02 L-03
H-01 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 HEW-04 /054 W
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R 071440Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY QUITO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2777

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 0138

JOINT EMBASSY/USAID

DEPARTMENT FOR AMBASSADOR MARSHALL GREENE

AID/W FOR PHA/POP AND AA/LA

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SPOP, EC
SUBJECT: POLICY RE US INVOLVEMENT IN STERILIZATION ACTIVITIES

REF: QUITO 4531

1. SUMMARY: BECAUSE OF THE RISKS OF ADVERSELY AFFECTING
PROGRESS TO DATE IN POPULATION PROGRAMS AS WELL AS OUR OTHER
INTERESTS HERE IN ECUADOR, THE MISSION REITERATES ITS POLICY
AGAINST USG-SUPPORTED AGENCY INVOLVEMENT IN STERILIZATION
ACTIVITIES. REQUEST THAT THIS POLICY BE TRANSMITTED TO ALL
AID INTERMEDIARY AGENCIES. END SUMMARY

2. THE US MISSION POLICY ON STERILIZATION PROGRAMS WAS
REITERATED IN REFTTEL, LAST JUNE. IN SPITE OF THAT, THERE
HAVE BEEN AT LEAST THREE INSTANCES IN WHICH AID INTERMEDIARY
AGENCIES HAVE CONTACTED GOE OFFICIALS AND PRIVATE MEDICAL
PRACTITIONERS ON FORMAL AND INFORMAL BASES OFFERING ADVICE
AND ASSISTANCE IN DEVELOPING A STERILIZATION CAPABILITY.
THE MOST RECENT SUCH INCIDENT INVOLVES A CONTACT BETWEEN
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AVS AND THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF HEALTH IN DECEMBER. WE ARE
CONCERNED THAT OUR POLICY AND THE RATIONALE FOR IT HAVE NOT
BEEN COMMUNICATED TO THE INTERMEDIARIES WITH THE RESULT
THAT WE HAVE HAD TO DAMPEN ENTHUSIASMS RAISED THROUGH
DIRECT CONTACTS. THUS THIS CABLE WHICH IS INTENDED TO EXPLAIN
IN SOME DETAIL THAT RATIONALE.

3. THE COUNTRY TEAM APPRECIATES THE ENERGY THAT AID HAS PUT INTO ADVANCING FAMILY PLANNING ON ALL FRONTS INCLUDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOPHISTICATED BUT SIMPLE AND CHEAP STERILIZATION TECHNOLOGY. WE ARE IMPRESSED WITH THESE INITIATIVES AND BELIEVE THAT THEY ARE AN IMPORTANT PART OF OUR EFFORTS TO REDUCE THE RATE OF POPULATION GROWTH THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. OUR VIEW, HOWEVER, IS THAT IN THE OVERALL MATRIX OF US INTERESTS IN ECUADOR, THE TIME FOR US INVOLVEMENT IN STERILIZATION PROGRAMS HAS NOT YET COME.

4. OUR REASONS FOR CONCLUDING THAT THE USG MUST NOT RPT NOT BE INVOLVED IN ANY WAY WITH STERILIZATION PROGRAMS REACHING ECUADOREANS ARE POLITICAL. THE SPECTACLE OF THE BOLIVIAN FILM, "YAWAR MALLKU" (BLOOD OF THE CONDOR), PLAYING AT ONE OF QUITO'S BEST MOVIE HOUSES IS SUFFICIENT TO EVOKE THE POLITICAL REACTION SCENARIO. IT WILL NOT BE ENOUGH FOR THE USG TO PROTEST THAT OUR STERILIZATION COOPERATION IS INTENDED ONLY FOR VOLUNTARY STERILIZATION PROGRAMS AND IS PROVIDED ONLY AT THE REQUEST OF THE GOE. THERE WILL BE CASES OF OVER-ZEALOUS ENCOURAGEMENT OF STERILIZATION. WE WILL GET BLAMED, AND OUR OTHER INTERESTS WILL SUFFER. OF COURSE, THERE WILL BE ACCUSATIONS OF USG STERILIZATION ACTIVITY WHETHER OR NOT WE ARE ACTUALLY INVOLVED, PARTICULARLY WHEN WE ARE EXPERIENCING TROUBLES IN OTHER AREAS.

5. IN THE EVENT OF A STERILIZATION ACCUSATION, WE FEEL WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO ANSWER TRUTHFULLY THAT NO USG AGENCY HAS INVOLVED ITSELF, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, IN THE PRO-

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VISION OF EQUIPMENT, SERVICES, TRAINING OR INFORMATION RELATING TO STERILIZATION OR ABORTION. FOR THIS REASON, THE MISSION WILL NOT CONCUR IN, OR APPROVE, SUCH ACTIVITIES WHEN SPONSORED BY PRIVATE US INSTITUTIONS IF THEY ARE FULLY OR PARTIALLY SUBSIDIZED BY ANY USG AGENCY.

6. NOT ONLY WOULD WE SUFFER A SETBACK IN OUR GENERAL POLITICAL INTERESTS, THE POPULATION BENEFITS OF USG INVOLVEMENT IN STERILIZATION PROGRAMS ARE NOT WORTH THE RISK OF POLITICAL DAMAGE TO OTHER POPULATION EFFORTS. WE AND THE GOE SHARE AN INTEREST IN PROTECTING AND ADVANCING THE EXISTING PROGRAMS OF FAMILY PLANNING. WHEN QUERIED ABOUT STERILIZATION, THE PRESENT MINISTER OF HEALTH SAID THAT ECUADOR WAS NOT YET READY FOR STERILIZATION AS A FAMILY PLANNING METHOD. THE COUNTRY TEAM CONCURS, AND BELIEVES THAT PROMOTION OF STERILIZATION NOW MIGHT WELL RESULT IN A BACKLASH AGAINST ALL FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAMS. THERE IS MUCH REMAINING TO BE DONE IN PROMOTING PILLS, CONDOMS, ETC., WHICH HAVE BEEN FULLY ACCEPTED BY THE ECUADOREAN

SOCIETY. WE WOULD PREFER WASHINGTON TO RENEW SUPPORT FOR EXTENDING THESE ALREADY ACCEPTABLE METHODS OF FAMILY PLANNING (SEE SEPTTEL). BIG GAINS IN REDUCING THE POPULATION GROWTH RATE ARE THE POTENTIAL HERE.

7. OUR NON-INVOLVEMENT IN STERILIZATION IN ECUADOR DOES NOT MEAN OUR ADVOCACY OF GOE NON-INVOLVEMENT. SOME STERILIZATIONS (APPROXIMATELY 1,000 PER YEAR) TAKE PLACE IN GOE FACILITIES, AND MORE STERILIZATIONS ARE UNDOUBTEDLY PERFORMED IN PRIVATE FACILITIES. THE GOE AND PRIVATE ECUADOREANS HAVE, AND SHOULD CONTINUE TO HAVE ACCESS TO STERILIZATION INFORMATION AND EQUIPMENT FROM NON-USG-FINANCED SOURCES. WE BELIEVE MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATION SUPPORT FOR THIS WOULD BE APPROPRIATE.

8. ACTION REQUESTED: PLEASE INFORM ALL RELEVANT STATE/AID AND OTHER USG DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES THAT THEY AND THEIR

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CONTRACTORS AND GRANTEEES SHOULD REFRAIN FROM ANY INVOLVEMENT IN STERILIZATION PROGRAMS CONNECTED WITH ECUADOR, INCLUDING INFORMAL CONTACT PROMOTING THE CONCEPT.

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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